Office of the Chief Electoral Officer

2015–16

Report on Plans and Priorities

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Chief Electoral Officer of Canada

The Honourable Peter Van Loan, PC, MP
Leader of the Government in the House of Commons

Elections Canada

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Table of Contents

Chief Electoral Officer's Message 5

Section I: Organizational Expenditure Overview 7

- Organizational Profile 7
- Organizational Context 8
- Planned Expenditures 13
- Departmental Spending Trend 14
- Elections Canada's Financial Framework 14
- Estimates by Vote 15

Section II: Analysis of Programs by Strategic Outcome 17

- Program 1.1: Electoral Operations 17
- Program 1.2: Regulation of Electoral Activities 21
- Program 1.3: Electoral Engagement 24
- Internal Services 26

Section III: Supplementary Information 29

- Future-Oriented Statement of Operations 29
- Supplementary Information Tables 30
- Tax Expenditures and Evaluations 30

Section IV: Organizational Contact Information 31

- General Enquiries 31
- Media Information 31

Appendix: Definitions 33

Endnotes 35

Chief Electoral Officer's Message

By March 1, 2015, Elections Canada had achieved essential readiness for the 2015 general election, scheduled for October 19. The agency is now prepared to conduct the next general election in 338 electoral districts. It has largely implemented the recent amendments to the *Canada Elections Act* and is on pace to complete key administrative changes aimed at improving services to electors by October 19.

For 2015–16, Elections Canada will focus on one overarching priority: delivering the 2015 general election. This entails maintaining election readiness, refining preparations, progressively deploying resources across the country, conducting the election and completing wrap-up activities.

For the 2015 general election, electors can expect more convenient services and improved information. They can now verify and update their voter registration online. Information and frequent reminders in a variety of new formats will advise electors on when, where and ways to register and vote. We will also offer more opportunities to vote with an additional day of advance polls and special ballot voting at select Elections Canada satellite offices.

As part of our commitment to ensure accessibility for all Canadian voters, Elections Canada has worked with the disability community to identify 35 accessibility standards that returning officers will use to select voting locations. Electors will now be able to verify the accessibility of their polling site on their voter information card, on our website or by calling our local offices in advance, enabling them to make alternative arrangements if needed.

Elections Canada has finalized new processes and administrative measures to improve the performance of poll workers, including enhanced recruitment practices, modernized training and, when possible under the Act, simplified procedures and clearer instructions for election workers. To support returning officers in recruiting a competent work force, the agency is proceeding with a Treasury Board submission to increase the fees paid to poll workers and other local office staff.

In addition to other measures the agency is taking, these initiatives will contribute to compliance with procedures at the polls and to the consistent application of voter identification requirements. Elections Canada will commission an independent audit of poll worker performance and report on the results.

Elections Canada will continue to consult the Advisory Committee of Political Parties regarding written opinions, guidelines and interpretation notes on the application of the Act to political entities. The agency is also completing extensive updates to the systems that support political financing in light of new provisions under the Act and will update handbooks for political entities. The voters lists available to candidates and parties will also be improved through efforts to increase currency before election day.

In making these enhancements, Elections Canada will improve the election experience for electors and political entities alike.

Marc Mayrand
Chief Electoral Officer of Canada

Section I: Organizational Expenditure Overview

Organizational Profile

Chief Electoral Officer: Marc Mayrand

Agency: Office of the Chief Electoral Officer

Year established: 1920

Main legislative authorities: *Canada Elections Act*,[1] *Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act*,[2] *Referendum Act*[3]

Other:

New Legislation

An analysis of proposed amendments to electoral legislation[4] impacting Elections Canada's business can be found on the agency's website.

Note: At the time of finalizing the *2015–16 Report on Plans and Priorities*, Bill C-50, *An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act*, had just been introduced. It remains before Parliament. Elections Canada had insufficient time to review the new legislation and factor in its implementation, including planned expenditures, for the current report. The agency will provide updates in its 2015–16 quarterly financial reports.

Judicial Decisions and Proceedings

An analysis of judicial decisions and proceedings[5] that may affect electoral legislation can be found on Elections Canada's website.

Organizational Context

Raison d'être

The Office of the Chief Electoral Officer, commonly known as Elections Canada, is an independent, non-partisan agency that reports directly to Parliament. Its mandate is to:

- be prepared to conduct a federal general election, by-election or referendum
- administer the political financing provisions of the *Canada Elections Act*
- monitor compliance with electoral legislation
- conduct public information campaigns on voter registration, voting and becoming a candidate
- conduct education programs for students on the electoral process
- provide support to the independent commissions in charge of adjusting the boundaries of federal electoral districts following each decennial census
- carry out studies on alternative voting methods and, with the approval of parliamentarians, test alternative voting processes for future use during electoral events
- provide assistance and co-operation in electoral matters to electoral agencies in other countries or to international organizations

Responsibilities

In fulfilling its mandate, Elections Canada also has the responsibility to:

- appoint, train and support returning officers and retain the services of field liaison officers across Canada
- maintain the National Register of Electors, which is used to prepare preliminary lists of electors at the start of electoral events
- maintain electoral geography information, which provides the basis for maps and other geographic products
- register political entities, including political parties, electoral district associations, candidates, leadership contestants, third parties that engage in election advertising, as well as referendum committees
- administer the reimbursements and subsidies paid to eligible candidates, registered political parties and auditors

- disclose information on registered parties and electoral district associations, registered parties' nomination and leadership contestants, candidates, third parties and referendum committees, including their financial returns
- refer to the Commissioner of Canada Elections information concerning possible offences under the *Canada Elections Act*
- consult the Advisory Committee of Political Parties to receive advice and recommendations
- issue written opinions, guidelines and interpretation notes on the application of the *Canada Elections Act* to political entities
- appoint the Broadcasting Arbitrator, who is responsible for allocating free and paid broadcasting time among political parties and for arbitrating disputes that may arise between parties and broadcasters
- recommend to Parliament amendments for the better administration of the *Canada Elections Act* by submitting a recommendations report after a general election as well as by providing expert advice and other special reports

Strategic Outcome(s) and Program Alignment Architecture

Elections Canada has a single strategic outcome, supported by the following Program Alignment Architecture (PAA):

1. **Strategic Outcome:** An Accessible Electoral Framework that Canadians Trust and Use
   - 1.1 **Program:** Electoral Operations
     - 1.1.1 **Sub-program:** Electoral Preparedness
     - 1.1.2 **Sub-program:** Electoral Event Delivery
     - 1.1.3 **Sub-Program:** Electoral Boundaries Redistribution
   - 1.2 **Program:** Regulation of Electoral Activities
     - 1.2.1 **Sub-program:** Administration of Political Financing
     - 1.2.2 **Sub-program:** Compliance [and Enforcement]*
   - 1.3 **Program:** Electoral Engagement
     - 1.3.1 **Sub-program:** Civic Education and Outreach
     - 1.3.2 **Sub-program:** Electoral Development
   - **Internal Services**

***Note:** Enforcement provisions of the *Canada Elections Act* now fall under the Director of Public Prosecutions. Elections Canada will amend its PAA to reflect this change.

Organizational Priorities

Organizational Priorities

Priority	Type	Program(s)
Maintain readiness and successfully deliver the 42nd general election in 2015	New	Electoral Operations Regulation of Electoral Activities Electoral Engagement Internal Services

Description

Delivering elections is at the core of Elections Canada's mandate. The 42nd general election is scheduled to take place on October 19, 2015. Elections Canada achieved election readiness by March 1, 2015. The agency has largely implemented amendments to the *Canada Elections Act* and completed the vast majority of its three-year plan of administrative changes aimed at improving services to electors.

Deploying resources for conducting and wrapping up the general election will be the agency's sole priority in 2015–16. Elections Canada's efforts in delivering the next general election are guided by the following objectives:

- strengthen Canadians' confidence in the reliability of election results and the agency's administration and regulation of the event
- enhance the electoral experience of electors and political entities within the parameters of the *Canada Elections Act*
- administer and regulate an increasingly complex electoral event in a transparent and effective manner

Over the reporting period, progressive deployment activities will consist of:

- hiring and training additional personnel required for the conduct of the election
- staging field material and equipment
- setting up call centres
- conducting pre-election advertising for voter registration
- printing manuals and various geographical products
- provisioning technology to field offices

Once the writs are issued, the main delivery activities will entail:

- informing Canadians on when, where and the different ways to register and vote
- registering electors and preparing the preliminary lists of electors
- supporting political entities and keeping them informed

- opening 338 local offices and 240 additional points of service
- receiving, assessing and confirming candidate nominations
- hiring, assessing and training election workers
- conducting targeted revision
- delivering voter information cards to some 25 million electors
- opening over 70,000 polling stations in approximately 20,000 polling sites
- counting the votes and reporting results to headquarters and to the media consortium

Close-out activities following the general election will include:

- validating election results
- participating in judicial recounts as required
- evaluating and reporting on the conduct of the election and internal programs
- releasing an audit report on the performance of poll workers
- auditing political entities' financial returns and reimbursing election expenses of eligible political parties and candidates

Risk Analysis

Key Risks

Risk	Risk Response Strategy	Link to PAA
General election called before October 19, 2015	The 42nd general election is scheduled for October 19, 2015, but a general election could be called at an earlier date. To mitigate this risk, Elections Canada achieved election readiness by March 1. It will continue to monitor its operating environment and begin deploying event delivery resources when and if required.	Electoral Operations Regulation of Electoral Activities Electoral Engagement Internal Services
Insufficient time to fully implement changes in Bill C-50 within the proposed 60 days for its coming into force	Bill C-50, *An Act to amend the Canada Elections Act*, was introduced on December 10, 2014, and remains before Parliament. While every effort will be made to implement this bill, 60 days	Electoral Operations Regulation of Electoral Activities Electoral Engagement Internal Services

Risk	Risk Response Strategy	Link to PAA
	following royal assent is insufficient time for the agency to fully implement the changes. As and when required, the agency will determine how it can proceed to implement the bill and inform parliamentarians.	
Electoral event delivery impacted by a compromise of information and communications technology systems or services	Information and communications technology systems and services have a significant role to play at all times, but especially during an election period and on election day. Numerous measures have been and will continue to be taken as part of an agency-wide mitigation plan, including risk and vulnerability assessments and contingency planning.	Electoral Operations Regulation of Electoral Activities Electoral Engagement Internal Services
Non-compliance by poll workers with rules and procedures prescribed by the *Canada Elections Act*	Voting processes and procedures are complex. To reduce the impact of this complexity, Elections Canada invested in a new election officer recruitment and training program. The agency also reviewed forms and processes with a view to making them more user-friendly. Finally, to help returning officers recruit competent staff, the agency is proceeding with a Treasury Board submission to increase the fees paid to poll workers and other local office staff.	Electoral Operations Regulation of Electoral Activities Electoral Engagement Internal Services

Planned Expenditures

Budgetary Financial Resources (dollars)

2015–16 Main Estimates	2015–16 Planned Spending	2016–17 Planned Spending	2017–18 Planned Spending
395,959,817	395,959,817	90,511,619	87,436,132

Human Resources (Full-Time Equivalents)

2015–16	2016–17	2017–18
554	452	452

Budgetary Planning Summary for Strategic Outcome and Programs (dollars)

Strategic Outcome, Programs and Internal Services	2012–13 Expenditures	2013–14 Expenditures	2014–15 Forecast Spending	2015–16 Main Estimates*	2015–16 Planned Spending*	2016–17 Planned Spending	2017–18 Planned Spending
Strategic Outcome: An Accessible Electoral Framework that Canadians Trust and Use							
Electoral Operations**	37,009,414	45,326,885	95,546,949	277,113,580	277,113,580	39,633,822	38,262,594
Regulation of Electoral Activities***	37,509,163	27,960,704	20,791,801	79,015,382	79,015,382	10,949,059	9,244,800
Electoral Engagement	7,860,678	7,974,120	8,982,024	8,060,043	8,060,043	8,118,902	8,118,902
Subtotal	82,379,255	81,261,709	125,320,774	364,189,005	364,189,005	58,701,783	55,626,296
Internal Services****	37,200,938	38,966,040	31,693,618	31,770,812	31,770,812	31,809,836	31,809,836
Total	119,580,193	120,227,749	157,014,392	395,959,817	395,959,817	90,511,619	87,436,132

*2015–16 Main Estimates and Planned Spending are significantly higher than in previous years because of the 2015 general election.

**Forecast spending for the Electoral Operations program is higher in 2014–15 as a result of the activities required to achieve operational readiness for the 2015 general election.

***The reduction in spending on the Regulation of Electoral Activities program from 2012–13 to 2014–15 primarily results from the phase-out of quarterly allowances to political parties, as set out in *An Act to implement certain*

provisions of the 2011 budget as updated on June 6, 2011 and other measures. The increase in 2015–16 results from the expected reimbursements that will be paid to eligible political parties and candidates for expenses in the 2015 general election.

**** Internal Services spending for 2012–13 and 2013–14 includes one-time expenditures for the Office Consolidation and Relocation project. The project ended in 2013–14.

Departmental Spending Trend

Forecast spending is higher in 2014–15 as a result of the activities required to achieve operational readiness for the 42nd general election, which is to be held on October 19, 2015. The fall election also explains the significant increase in planned spending in 2015–16.

The reduction in spending between 2012–13 and 2017–18, two non–general election years, is largely explained by the phase-out of quarterly allowances to political parties and the completion of Elections Canada's office consolidation in Gatineau.

The reduction from 2016–17 to 2017–18 is explained by the expected completion of activities closing out the 42nd general election.

The reduction of planned spending in the Voted authority mainly results from transferring the Commissioner of Canada Elections to the Public Prosecution Service of Canada.

Elections Canada's Financial Framework

Elections Canada's unique dual funding mechanism and planning practices are a function of its mandate. The agency is funded in part by an annual appropriation that covers the salaries of its permanent staff and is not affected by the electoral cycle. Given the unpredictability of electoral events, the agency also has a statutory authority that allows it to draw directly from the Consolidated Revenue Fund.

Under Canada's parliamentary system, general elections are scheduled to take place on fixed dates but can still be called in advance. This is particularly the case in a minority government situation. By-elections held to fill vacant seats in the House of Commons are also unpredictable.

As a result of these varying circumstances, Elections Canada does not include the incremental costs of election activities in its planned expenditures.

However, being in the third year of a majority government, the agency has included the estimated statutory funding requirements for the next general election in its planned spending. Related planned spending is also shown for 2015–16, 2016–17 and 2017–18.

Planned spending related to the 2015 general election is an estimate based on detailed forecasts and assumptions. A number of factors can impact the planned spending. These include but are not limited to the following: the actual duration of the campaign (the Act sets a minimum of 36 days); the level of spending by political entities, which impacts reimbursements; adjustments to election worker fees and allowances; market forces for expenses such as the media buy, local office rents, furniture and equipment; outstanding procurement processes; and the actual level of staffing in the field to meet requirements.

Estimates by Vote

For information on Elections Canada's organizational appropriations, consult the *2015–16 Main Estimates* on the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat website.[6]

Section II: Analysis of Programs by Strategic Outcome

Strategic Outcome: An Accessible Electoral Framework that Canadians Trust and Use

Achieving the strategic outcome is facilitated by a Program Alignment Architecture (PAA) consisting of three programs that are directly beneficial to Canadians.[7]

Program	Expected Results
Electoral Operations	The electoral process is accessible and responsive to the needs of electors
Regulation of Electoral Activities	Canadians have confidence in the integrity of how the electoral process is managed
Electoral Engagement	Canadians have the information they need to engage in the electoral process

A fourth program, Internal Services, contributes to the agency's organizational priorities by enabling the other three programs to achieve their expected results. The planning highlights in this section take into account the risks and mitigation strategies identified in Section I.

Program 1.1: Electoral Operations

Description

This program allows Elections Canada to deliver fair and efficient electoral events whenever they may be required so that Canadians are able to exercise their democratic right to vote during a federal general election, by-election or referendum by providing an accessible and constantly improved electoral process responsive to the needs of electors.

Budgetary Financial Resources (dollars)

2015–16 Main Estimates	2015–16 Planned Spending*	2016–17 Planned Spending	2017–18 Planned Spending
277,113,580	277,113,580	39,633,822	38,262,594

*Planned spending is higher in 2015–16 as a result of the conduct of the 42nd general election, which is to be held on October 19, 2015.

Human Resources (Full-Time Equivalents)

2015–16*	2016–17	2017–18
297	195	195

*The number of full-time equivalents is higher in 2015–16 as a result of the conduct of the 42nd general election, which is to be held on October 19, 2015.

Performance Measurement

Expected Results	Performance Indicators
The electoral process is accessible and responsive to the needs of electors	Percentage of voters who are satisfied with their voting experience
	Percentage of non-voters reporting administrative reasons as their main reason for not voting
Elections are delivered whenever they are called	Number of days required for all electoral offices to be fully functional
	Percentage of eligible electors included on the list (coverage)
	Percentage of electors included on the list and at the correct address (currency/accuracy)
Elections accurately reflect the choices Canadians make	Variance between the preliminary and official results (validated or subsequent to judicial recounts)
	Number of electoral districts where official election results have been overturned because of administrative errors
Canadian electors have opportunities to exercise their right to vote	Number of complaints that deal with accessibility of the voting process for people with disabilities
The redistribution of electoral boundaries is effectively supported	Percentage of commissioners who are satisfied with the services and support provided by Elections Canada

Planning Highlights

The following planned initiatives within the Electoral Operations program will contribute to the agency's organizational priorities in 2015–16.

Maintain Readiness and Implement Administrative Improvements

In 2015–16, the Electoral Operations program will continue to maintain and refine its level of readiness to deliver the 42nd general election.

Improve Quality Controls

Elections Canada is investing significant efforts into reducing procedural and record-keeping errors at the polls. Enhanced recruitment practices, modernized training and, where possible, simplified procedures and clearer instructions for election workers will contribute to building quality assurance and improve poll worker performance.

Modernize Voter Registration

Elections Canada will continue to improve the accuracy of the National Register of Electors by promoting online voter registration. A new authentication policy will facilitate the online registration process.

The agency has also invested in developing a secure national voters database that can be updated in real time by returning officers and electors themselves during an election, using the online registration service. The new database is expected to be operational by early March 2015.

Also, Elections Canada will write directly to some 800,000 potential electors to confirm their information and request their consent to be added to the National Register of Electors.

These initiatives aim at improving the accuracy of the voters lists used on election day. They will also contribute to reducing the number of electors registering in person at the polls, which was a known source of procedural and record-keeping errors in the last general election.

Enhance Accessibility

Elections Canada will continue to improve accessibility by reviewing its inventory of approximately 20,000 polling sites against 35 criteria, including level access. The agency will communicate to electors the extent to which polling sites will be accessible and barrier-free. Electors will be able to verify the accessibility of their polling site in advance and make alternative arrangements for voting if needed. The agency will also assign accessibility officers

to local offices, extend training of election workers, and provide a Braille list of candidates and magnifiers at polling stations.

Implement the Voter Identification Policy

For the 2015 general election, Elections Canada will implement a new voter ID policy that sets the criteria for determining authorized ID, lists the pieces authorized for registering and voting, and provides guidance to ensure the consistent application of the ID requirements. The new policy is designed to improve accessibility for electors, particularly those who may have difficulty providing documentary proof of residence. It is also expected to improve compliance at the polls by reducing the need for attestations since more electors should have the required ID.

Expand Opportunities for Voting

For the 2015 general election, Elections Canada will offer more opportunities to vote through an additional advance voting day and more advance voting locations. To make voting more convenient for students and Aboriginal electors who may find it difficult to vote, voting by special ballot will be expanded to some 110 locations such as YMCAs, Aboriginal Friendship Centres and school campuses.

Improve Contact Centre Services

For the 2015 general election, Elections Canada will implement a new case management system to improve how electors interact with the agency. Changes include a new e-mail enquiry service and a new centralized online complaint form supported by clear protocols and escalation procedures for responding in a timely manner. To ensure that Elections Canada can respond effectively to all telephone enquiries and e-mails received during the election, it will renew partnerships for contact centre services with other government departments and outsource additional contact centre agents to the private sector.

Deliver the 2015 General Election

The delivery of the 2015 general election will involve a series of activities carried out at headquarters in the National Capital Region, in 338 local offices, 240 additional points of service and approximately 20,000 polling sites across Canada.

Once the writs are issued, resources will be deployed to local offices without delay. Returning officers will set up local and satellite offices, and secure polling sites. Elections Canada headquarters will equip offices with information and communications technology. It will distribute supplies such as hardware, software, electoral data, forms and instruction manuals.

During the election period, returning officers, under the supervision and with the support of headquarters staff, will proceed with hiring, training and assessing election workers. They will also receive and validate candidates' nomination papers. Returning officers are also responsible for overseeing outreach activities and targeted revision in areas where registration rates are lower.

In addition to election day voting, advance polls will be open for four days as opposed to three in the past. Returning officers will deploy approximately 200,000 election officers to some 20,000 polling sites across Canada to administer the voting process, tally the votes and report results to headquarters. Following the election, returning officers will return election materials to headquarters and close local offices, satellite offices and polling sites. Elections Canada will then validate the preliminary results and prepare the official voting results for publication. Within 90 days of the return of the writs, the Chief Electoral Officer will submit a report to the Speaker of the House of Commons on the conduct of the election.

Program 1.2: Regulation of Electoral Activities

Description

This program provides Canadians with an electoral process that is fair, transparent and in compliance with the *Canada Elections Act*. Within this program, Elections Canada is responsible for administering the political financing provisions of the Act. This includes monitoring compliance, disclosure and reporting of financial activities.

Budgetary Financial Resources (dollars)

2015–16 Main Estimates	2015–16 Planned Spending*	2016–17 Planned Spending	2017–18 Planned Spending
79,015,382	79,015,382	10,949,059	9,244,800

*The increase in planned spending in 2015–16 is primarily a result of the reimbursements to political parties and candidates for eligible expenses expected in the 42nd general election.

Human Resources (Full-Time Equivalents)

2015–16	2016–17	2017–18
59	59	59

Performance Measurement

Expected Results	Performance Indicators
Canadians have confidence in the integrity of how the electoral process is managed	Percentage of Canadian electors who believe Elections Canada is non-partisan
	Percentage of candidates who express confidence in how Elections Canada administers and regulates federal elections
Canadians have timely access to accurate political financing data	Percentage of guidelines and interpretation notes issued within statutory requirements
Political entities understand and comply with their obligations under the *Canada Elections Act*	Proportion of cases that are subject to administrative measures and/or referred to the Commissioner of Canada Elections
	Percentage of candidates who are satisfied with the tools and information provided by Elections Canada

Planning Highlights

The following planned initiatives within the Regulation of Electoral Activities program will contribute to the agency's organizational priorities in 2015–16.

Finalize Registration of Electoral District Associations

Elections Canada will complete the registration of new electoral district associations and confirm existing associations under Canada's new electoral districts. The agency will also continue to assist political entities in deregistering electoral district associations that will no longer be active under the new boundaries.

Implement the Electoral Integrity Program

The Electoral Integrity Program was created to help Elections Canada better prevent, detect and analyze incidents affecting the integrity of the electoral process, as well as recommend responses. To improve the agency's risk awareness for the 2015 general election and its ability to respond, the office will develop and operate an electoral incident management service. This service will interact with the Office of the Commissioner of Canada Elections and the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission.

Elections Canada will also ensure that an independent audit of poll worker performance is conducted to meet a new requirement of the *Canada Elections Act*.

Align Political Financing Systems with the New Legal Framework

Elections Canada will prepare new financial filing software and update internal systems to implement the recent amendments to the *Canada Elections Act*. The agency will also develop new financial reporting forms for political entities to capture additional information required under the Act.

Issue Written Opinions, Guidelines and Interpretation Notes

The *Canada Elections Act* now requires Elections Canada to issue written opinions, guidelines and interpretation notes (OGIs) on the application of the Act to political entities. OGIs will be issued at the request of a political party, or on Elections Canada's own initiative, following consultations with all registered parties as well as with the Commissioner of Canada Elections. Elections Canada is mandated to respond to all OGI requests from political parties. The agency will also follow this process to update all handbooks for political entities.

There are mandatory time constraints for issuing OGIs. Elections Canada will work with a steering committee of the Advisory Committee of Political Parties to manage the process and establish priorities.

Administer Reimbursements and Subsidies

Following the election, Elections Canada will be ready to receive political entities' financial returns. It will issue reimbursements to eligible candidates and registered political parties, as well as subsidies to auditors.

Audit Returns Following the General Election

Following the election, Elections Canada will perform compliance audits on all election expenses returns of candidates and parties using updated audit programs that reflect recent legislative changes.

Program 1.3: Electoral Engagement

Description

This program promotes and sustains the Canadian electoral process. It provides Canadians with electoral education and information programs so that they can make informed decisions about their engagement in the electoral process. It also aims to improve the electoral framework by consulting and sharing electoral practices with other stakeholders.

Budgetary Financial Resources (dollars)

2015–16 Main Estimates	2015–16 Planned Spending	2016–17 Planned Spending	2017–18 Planned Spending
8,060,043	8,060,043	8,118,902	8,118,902

Human Resources (Full-Time Equivalents)

2015–16	2016–17	2017–18
62	62	62

Performance Measurement

Expected Results	Performance Indicators
Canadians have the information they need to engage in the electoral process	Canadian electors' recall rate of the Elections Canada advertising campaign
	Percentage of Canadian electors using voting options other than election day voting
	Percentage of Canadian electors who report that they knew when, where and ways to register and vote
Elections Canada is effective in promoting its civic education program and mobilizing stakeholders to carry out voter education	Number of orders for Elections Canada's civic education materials
	Number of stakeholders involved in Elections Canada's education activities

Expected Results	Performance Indicators
Electoral agencies and international organizations benefit from assistance and co-operation in electoral matters	Number of official requests for international assistance to which Elections Canada responds
Parliamentarians have timely access to evidence-based information on existing and emerging electoral issues	Proportion of recommendations endorsed by parliamentarians and ultimately enacted

Planning Highlights

The following planned initiatives within the Electoral Engagement program will contribute to the agency's organizational priorities in 2015–16.

Provide Support to Parliament

Elections Canada will continue to inform parliamentarians on an ongoing basis of its plans to deliver the 2015 general election. It will support the work of parliamentary committees on any matters about which the Chief Electoral Officer may be called upon to appear.

Following the 2015 general election, the agency will prepare and submit the Chief Electoral Officer's official report on the conduct of the general election as required by the Act.

Engage Stakeholders

During the reporting period, Elections Canada will continue to engage political parties through the Advisory Committee of Political Parties. It will proceed with issuing written opinions, guidelines and interpretation notes under the Act, hold an annual general meeting before late summer of 2015 and hold a conference call with members following the issue of the writs.

The agency will also benefit from the advice of the Elections Canada Advisory Board on matters relating to Canada's electoral system, its voting processes, and support for a vigorous democracy that reflects the evolving needs and circumstances of Canadians.

Elections Canada will continue to engage the disability community through its Advisory Group for Disability Issues, established in February 2014. In consultation with this group, we will refine and implement the new *Accessibility Policy and Service Offering* for the 2015 general election. Members will help disseminate election information products to the communities they represent. Elections Canada will host a post-election meeting with the advisory group to obtain feedback on the conduct of the general election and establish a forward agenda for future improvements to the electoral process for persons with disabilities.

The agency will work with a variety of national organizations to reach groups of electors who are less aware of the electoral process or who face barriers to voting. These include First Nations organizations, youth groups, and organizations representing seniors, students, ethnocultural electors and homeless electors. Elections Canada will encourage these organizations to distribute election information products.

Communicate with Electors

Elections Canada will implement a comprehensive, multi-channel communications campaign to ensure Canadians know when, where and ways to register and vote, and turn to Elections Canada when in doubt. Information will be provided in a variety of new formats. There will be frequent reminders of important dates within the election calendar. The campaign will feature targeted communications just before and after the issue of the writs, aimed at encouraging first-time voters and voters who have recently moved to register or update their registration online. Following the election, the agency will prepare a program assessment to identify areas for improvement.

Promote Civic Education

Elections Canada will contract with CIVIX to hold a parallel election program in schools across Canada for the 2015 general election. The agency has worked with CIVIX, formerly known as Student Vote, since 2004 to conduct this program in classrooms from kindergarten to Grade 12. During the 2011 election, 3,750 schools took part (nearly one third of all Canadian schools), enabling over 560,000 students to practise casting a ballot for actual candidates. Following the election, the agency will complete an evaluation of the program, which has previously been shown to significantly increase students' knowledge, interest and sense of voting as a civic duty.

Internal Services

Description

Internal Services are groups of related activities and resources that are administered to support the needs of programs and other corporate obligations of an organization. These groups are: Management and Oversight Services; Communications Services; Legal Services; Human Resources Management Services; Financial Management Services; Information Management Services; Information Technology Services; Real Property Services; Materiel Services; Acquisition Services; and Travel and other administrative services. Internal Services include only those activities and resources that apply across an organization and not those provided specifically to a program.

Budgetary Financial Resources (dollars)

2015–16 Main Estimates	2015–16 Planned Spending	2016–17 Planned Spending	2017–18 Planned Spending
31,770,812	31,770,812	31,809,836	31,809,836

Human Resources (Full-Time Equivalents)

2015–16	2016–17	2017–18
136	136	136

Planning Highlights

The following planned initiatives within Internal Services will contribute to the agency's organizational priorities in 2015–16.

Support Delivery of the 2015 General Election

Elections Canada's internal services will continue to support the agency as it maintains election readiness and shifts to deploying resources at headquarters and in the field to support election delivery. For internal services, this includes the following activities:

- hiring temporary staff to assist in various tasks at Elections Canada headquarters
- providing finance and contracting services to both headquarters and the field (e.g. processing payments, administering payroll services for election workers, and issuing candidate reimbursements)
- deploying modern information technology, telecommunications infrastructure, and business systems solutions and services at headquarters and in the field
- supporting personnel at headquarters and in the field in managing the many changes being implemented for the 2015 general election

Amend the* Federal Elections Fees Tariff *Regulation

To support returning officers in recruiting a competent work force, the agency is proceeding with a Treasury Board submission to increase the fees paid to poll workers and other local office staff.

Finalize the 2015 General Election Reporting Framework

In 2015–16, Elections Canada will finalize the scope and approach for reporting on the conduct of the 2015 general election. The reports will draw on multiple perspectives and lines of evidence, including the new independent audit of poll worker performance; surveys of electors, candidates and election officers; returning officers' feedback; and other administrative data.

Strengthen Security

Elections Canada will continue to implement measures strengthening the management of its security in response to gaps identified in a 2012 audit report. The agency will reinforce governance and accountability for security management as well as controls over financial management and assets. We will continue to work with a broad network of public safety and security agencies, including local police services, to ensure the security of electors and workers as well as the continuity of our operations during the next general election.

Renew Strategic Plan

Over the reporting period, Elections Canada will continue the process of renewing its strategic plan to set a long-term direction that remains aligned with the evolving needs of electors and political entities.

Enhance Information Management and Technology

Information management and technology will continue to play a pivotal role in improvements to election delivery. Elections Canada will deploy new applications and use automation where possible to improve business processes in support of quality and compliance. These processes include enhanced online voter registration, voters list revision, public enquiries and complaints management services, geographical information systems, voter information systems, modernized electronic workflows, and enhanced reporting and analytics tools. The agency will complete the implementation of PeopleSoft HR as scheduled, and will develop plans to implement SAP Financials following the general election.

Manage Human Resources

The Chief Human Resources Officer Sector will continue to support the agency, particularly in the areas of staffing, health and safety, and official languages.

Section III: Supplementary Information

Future-Oriented Statement of Operations

The future-oriented condensed statement of operations presented in this subsection is intended to serve as a general overview of Elections Canada's operations. The forecasted financial information on expenses and revenues is prepared on an accrual accounting basis to strengthen accountability and to improve transparency and financial management.

Because the future-oriented statement of operations is prepared on an accrual accounting basis and the forecast and planned spending amounts presented in other sections of this report are prepared on an expenditure basis, amounts will differ.

A more detailed future-oriented statement of operations and associated notes, including a reconciliation of the net costs of operations to the requested authorities, can be found on Elections Canada's website.[8]

Future-Oriented Condensed Statement of Operations
For the Year Ended March 31
(dollars)

Financial Information	2014–15 Estimated Results	2015–16 Planned Results	Difference
Total expenses	158,994,774	412,678,336	253,683,562
Total revenues	–	–	–
Net cost of operations	158,994,774	412,678,336	253,683,562

Elections Canada estimates $412.7 million in expenses for 2015–16. This represents an increase of $253.7 million from the 2014–15 estimated results, which is mainly the result of conducting the 42nd general election to be held on October 19, 2015.

Supplementary Information Tables

The supplementary information tables listed in the *2015–16 Report on Plans and Priorities* can be found on Elections Canada's website:

- Details on Transfer Payment Program[9]
- Upcoming Internal Audit Reports[10]
- Policy on Green Procurement[11]

Tax Expenditures and Evaluations

The tax system can be used to achieve public policy objectives through the application of special measures such as low tax rates, exemptions, deductions, deferrals and credits. The Department of Finance Canada publishes cost estimates and projections for these measures annually in the *Tax Expenditures and Evaluations*[12] publication. The tax measures presented in the ***Tax Expenditures and Evaluations*** publication are the responsibility of the Minister of Finance.

Section IV: Organizational Contact Information

General Enquiries

Address: Elections Canada
30 Victoria Street
Gatineau, Quebec
K1A 0M6

Telephone: 1-800-463-6868
toll-free in Canada and the United States

001-800-514-6868
toll-free in Mexico

613-993-2975
from anywhere in the world

For people who are deaf or hard of hearing:
TTY 1-800-361-8935
toll-free in Canada and the United States

Fax: 613-954-8584
1-888-524-1444
toll-free in Canada and the United States

Website: www.elections.ca

Media Information

Telephone: 1-877-877-9515
819-939-1900
TTY 1-800-361-8935

Fax: 613-954-8584

Appendix: Definitions

Appropriation: Any authority of Parliament to pay money out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund.

Budgetary expenditures: Include operating and capital expenditures; transfer payments to other levels of government, organizations or individuals; and payments to Crown corporations.

Departmental Performance Report: Reports on an appropriated organization's actual accomplishments against the plans, priorities and expected results set out in the corresponding Reports on Plans and Priorities. These reports are tabled in Parliament in the fall.

Full-time equivalent: Is a measure of the extent to which an employee represents a full person-year charge against a departmental budget. Full-time equivalents are calculated as a ratio of assigned hours of work to scheduled hours of work. Scheduled hours of work are set out in collective agreements.

Management, Resources and Results Structure: A comprehensive framework that consists of an organization's inventory of programs, resources, results, performance indicators and governance information. Programs and results are depicted in their hierarchical relationship to each other and to the Strategic Outcome(s) to which they contribute. The Management, Resources and Results Structure is developed from the Program Alignment Architecture.

Non-budgetary expenditures: Include net outlays and receipts related to loans, investments and advances, which change the composition of the financial assets of the Government of Canada.

Performance: What an organization did with its resources to achieve its results, how well those results compare to what the organization intended to achieve and how well lessons learned have been identified.

Performance indicator: A qualitative or quantitative means of measuring an output or outcome, with the intention of gauging the performance of an organization, program, policy or initiative respecting expected results.

Performance reporting: The process of communicating evidence-based performance information. Performance reporting supports decision making, accountability and transparency.

Planned spending: For Reports on Plans and Priorities (RPPs) and Departmental Performance Reports (DPRs), planned spending refers to those amounts that receive Treasury Board approval by February 1. Therefore, planned spending may include amounts incremental to planned expenditures presented in the Main Estimates.

A department is expected to be aware of the authorities that it has sought and received. The determination of planned spending is a departmental responsibility, and departments must be able to defend the expenditure and accrual numbers presented in their RPPs and DPRs.

Plans: The articulation of strategic choices, which provides information on how an organization intends to achieve its priorities and associated results. Generally a plan will explain the logic behind the strategies chosen and tend to focus on actions that lead up to the expected result.

Priorities: Plans or projects that an organization has chosen to focus and report on during the planning period. Priorities represent the things that are most important or what must be done first to support the achievement of the desired Strategic Outcome(s).

Program: A group of related resource inputs and activities that are managed to meet specific needs and to achieve intended results and that are treated as a budgetary unit.

Program Alignment Architecture: A structured inventory of an organization's programs depicting the hierarchical relationship between programs and the Strategic Outcome(s) to which they contribute.

Report on Plans and Priorities: Provides information on the plans and expected performance of appropriated organizations over a three-year period. These reports are tabled in Parliament each spring.

Results: An external consequence attributed, in part, to an organization, policy, program or initiative. Results are not within the control of a single organization, policy, program or initiative; instead they are within the area of the organization's influence.

Strategic Outcome: A long-term and enduring benefit to Canadians that is linked to the organization's mandate, vision and core functions.

Target: A measurable performance or success level that an organization, program or initiative plans to achieve within a specified time period. Targets can be either quantitative or qualitative.

Endnotes

[1] http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/E-2.01

[2] http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/E-3

[3] http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/R-4.7

[4] www.elections.ca/content.aspx?section=res&dir=rep/est/rpp2015&document=legislation&lang=e

[5] www.elections.ca/content.aspx?section=res&dir=rep/est/rpp2015&document=judicial&lang=e

[6] http://publiservice.tbs-sct.gc.ca/ems-sgd/esp-pbc/me-bpd-eng.asp

[7] Elections Canada does not report at the sub-program level.

[8] www.elections.ca/content.aspx?section=res&dir=rep/est/rpp2015&document=fut&lang=e

[9] www.elections.ca/content.aspx?section=res&dir=rep/est/rpp2015&document=tpp&lang=e

[10] www.elections.ca/content.aspx?section=res&dir=rep/est/rpp2015&document=audit&lang=e

[11] www.elections.ca/content.aspx?section=res&dir=rep/est/rpp2015&document=pgp&lang=e

[12] *Tax Expenditures and Evaluations*, www.fin.gc.ca/purl/taxexp-eng.asp